

Title: It Ain't About Me

Text: 1 John 3:19-4:18

Target: Stop telling people and yourself you don't have what it takes because that's a lie.

- I. **Confidence that's Greater:** *"By this we shall know that we are of the truth and reassure our heart before him;"* (Vs. 19)
 - A. **Conviction of the Spirit:** *"for whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and he knows everything."* (Vs. 20)
 - B. **Clarity of the Spirit:** *"Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God."* (Vs. 21)
 - C. **Confirmation of the Spirit:** *"and whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do what pleases him."* (Vs. 22)
 - D. **Comfort of the Spirit:** *"Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us."* (Vs. 24)
- II. **Counsel that's Wiser:** *"Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God,"* (Vs. 4:1a)
 - A. **Be Careful, Not Cynical:**
 1. **Reject False Teachers:** *"for many false prophets have gone out into the world."* (Vs. 4:1b)
 2. **Recognize False Doctrine:** *"and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God."* (Vs. 4:3)
 - B. **Be Informed, Not Ignorant:** *"Little children, you are from God and have overcome them, for he who is in you is greater than he who is in the world."* (Vs. 4:4)
 1. **Affirmed by the World:** *"They are from the world; therefore they speak from the world, and the world listens to them."* (Vs. 4:5)
 2. **Accepted by God:** *"We are from God. Whoever knows God listens to us; whoever is not from God does not listen to us. By this we know the Spirit of truth and the spirit of error."* (Vs. 4:6)
- III. **Cause that's Bigger:** *"In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him."* (Vs. 4:9)
 - A. **Know God:** *"whoever loves has been born of God and knows God."* (Vs. 4:7)
 1. **His love for you:** *"In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."* (Vs. 4:10)
 2. **His loyalty to you:** *"No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us."* (Vs. 4:12)
 - B. **Make God Known:** *"And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world."* (Vs. 4:14)
 1. **Have Full Faith:** *"By this is love perfected with us, so that we may have confidence for the day of judgment, because as he is so also are we in this world."* (Vs. 4:17)
 2. **Have No Fear:** *"There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfected in love."* (Vs. 4:18)

Takeaway: What's on the inside has to get on the outside.

Sermon Discussion Questions:

Love. It's not a suggestion, but rather a commandment and compulsion to love because God first loved us. Knowing His commandments and keeping them, this is the central theme to abiding in God and knowing that He abides in us (I John 3:24). John goes on to instruct us to love one another "for love is of God." (I John 4:7).

Do you remember when we talked about the young lawyer that questioned Jesus on the greatest commandment (Luke 10)? What was Jesus' response? Do you remember when the lawyer asked Jesus, "who is my neighbor?" Jesus answered with the parable of the Good Samaritan and followed by instructing the lawyer to "go and do likewise."

Do you see the theme here? Repeated again, love God (keep His commandments) and love people. It's love. Not selective love, but love. Not conditional love, but love. Discuss in your group how you can display love to those that you encounter this next week.

I think there is something else for us as well. How can we remind ourselves that God first loved us as a catalyst to help us love others? As we enter this Thanksgiving season, can you be mindful of God's great love for you? How can you exhibit a spirit of gratitude and thanksgiving for God and His immeasurable love?